

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6343

INFO COMUSMACTHAI

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 0166

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV PINT TH

SUBJECT: THIRD EXTRAORDINARY SESSION OF PARLIAMENT

REF: BANGKOK 26894

1. THE OPPOSITION ORGANIZED CAMPAIGN TO HOLD AN EXTRA-ORDINARY SESSION PARLIAMENT GAINED 151 MP SUPPORTERS, AMONG WHOM WERE 15 SOCIAL JUSTICE PARTY (SJP) AND 10 SOCIAL NATIONALIST PARTY (SNP) MEMBERS, INCLUDING PRASIT KANCHANAWAT, ITS LEADER AND SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE. THIS WAS 28 MORE THAN THE MINIMUM ONE THIRD OF BOTH HOUSES

REQUIRED BY THE CONSTITUTION. ACCORDING TO OUR CHIEF POLITICAL ASSISTANT, WHO REPORTED FROM PARLIAMENT HOUSE, THE REQUEST WILL BE SUBMITTED TO PRASIT THIS AFTERNOON (JAN 5). THE NEW SESSION COULD OPEN AS SOON AS THURSDAY, JANUARY 8.

2. DURING THIS EXTRAORDINARY SESSION THE OPPOSITION HAS ANNOUNCED THAT IT WILL OFFER MOTIONS OF NO-CONFIDENCE IN GOVERNMENT. IN THE JANUARY 5 EANGKOK POST UTHAI PIMCHAICHON, DEMOCRAT PARTY DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL, IS QUOTED AS SAYING THAT THE DEMOCRAT NO-CONFIDENCE MOTION WILL HIGHLIGHT THE PROBLEMS FACING THE GOVERNMENT IN ECONOMIC, FOREIGN, SOCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS. THE
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INCREASE IN THE PRICE OF RICE AND THE TEMCO ISSUE WILL ALSO

BE KEY ITEMS IN THE DEBATE.

3. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH THE INCLUSION OF SJP AND SNP MEMBERS IN THE CALL FOR THE EXTRAORDINARY SESSION INDICATES THAT KHUKRIT WILL HAVE A TOUGHER TIME THAN PREVIOUSLY EXPECTED IN HOLDING HIS COALITION TOGETHER, THE EMBASSY BELIEVES THAT EXPECTATIONS OF THE EARLY DEMISE OF THE KHUKRIT GOVERNMENT ARE PREMATURE. FIRST THERE IS NO INDICATION THAT ALL 151 MPS WHO CALLED FOR THE SPECIAL SESSION TO DEBATE THE POLICIES OF THE KHUKRIT GOVERNMENT WILL IN FACT SUPPORT A NO-CONFIDENCE MOTION, ESPECIALLY IF THEY FACE THE PROSPECTS OF NEW ELECTIONS FOR WHICH FEW ARE FINANCIALLY OR POLITICALLY PREPARED. IN THE INTERIM THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT WILL RULE FOR 90 DAYS GIVING THEM AN ADVANTAGE IN THE ELECTIONS. EVEN IF KHUKRIT SHOULD RESIGN WITHOUT DISSOLVING PARLIAMENT, THE PROSPECTIVE COALITION WOULD HAVE TO INCLUDE GROUPS WITH SUCH DIVERSE IDEOLOGIES AND OUTLOOKS (SOCIALISTS, DEMOCRATS, SJP AND SNP) THAT IT IS HARD TO CONCEIVE THAT THEY COULD GET TOGETHER MUCH LESS WORK TOGETHER.
WHITEHOUSE

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